

# ARNOLD ARBORETUM

## HARVARD UNIVERSITY



### BULLETIN

OF

### POPULAR INFORMATION

---

JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS.JULY 2, 1915

---

**Three Asiatic Poplars.** Among the trees which have come from western Asia to the United States are three Poplars which give promise of being valuable in this country. They are hardy, grow rapidly and seem to be less liable to suffer from borers than many other Poplar trees. The first of these trees,

***Populus Maximowiczii***, is a native of eastern Siberia, Saghalin, and northern Japan. It is the largest tree of eastern Siberia, where it sometimes grows eighty feet high with a trunk three or four feet in diameter and a broad head of massive spreading branches, and in Japan it is only exceeded in size by the *Cercidiphyllum*. The trees in the Arboretum have been growing here several years and are twenty-five or thirty feet high, with smooth, pale brown stems and shapely heads. The leaves are broadest above the middle, very finely toothed, pale green and lustrous above, silvery white below, three or four inches long and two or two and a half inches wide. The fruit which is fully grown in May, unlike that of other Poplars, remains on the trees here until September without opening. Judging from the climate of the region where this Poplar grows naturally, it should be hardy in all the northern states and in a large part of Canada, and a valuable shade tree in regions of extreme cold like northern Minnesota and the Dakotas where it is possible to grow successfully a comparatively few trees of large size. In nurseries *P. Maximowiczii* is often confused with *Populus suaveolens*, another Siberian species, and it is sometimes called in the United States the "Japan Poplar." It is one of the handsomest and most satisfactory trees in the Arboretum collection of Poplars. The second of these Asiatic Poplars,

**Populus tomentosa**, is a common tree in temple gardens in Peking, in which it grows to a very large size, and is one of the handsomest, perhaps the handsomest of all Poplar-trees. The peculiarity of this tree is that the leaves of young plants and of vigorous shoots are thickly covered below with a coat of white felt which is not found on the leaves of older trees. When it was first discovered it was believed on this account to be the Silver Poplar of Europe, and it was not until the mature leaves were seen by botanists that it was found to be a distinct species. As it grows in Peking *Populus tomentosa* is a tree fully eighty feet high with a tall massive trunk covered with dark, deeply furrowed bark, and a head of erect and spreading branches. The leaves are thicker than those of other Poplars, five or six inches long and four or five inches broad, dark and lustrous above and pale below, and are divided on the margins into broad rounded teeth; they hang on long flattened stalks and, fluttering in the slightest breeze, make, as the blades come together, a noise like drops of rain in a heavy shower falling on a tin roof. Mr. S. Wells Williams, the distinguished Chinese scholar, noted on a specimen of a few leaves of this tree in the Gray Herbarium, that for this reason it is sometimes called in China "the rain tree." *Populus tomentosa* is a hardy tree in the Arboretum where it is growing at the rate of four or five feet a year, and there seems no reason why it should not grow to a large size here. Unfortunately it is one of the few Poplars which cannot be propagated by cuttings and can only be increased by grafting. It is probable, therefore, that it will never become a popular tree in this country unless a cheaper method of increasing it can be found. The third of these Poplars,

**Populus Simonii**, is a smaller tree, with pale bark, small, slightly and gracefully drooping branches and small pale green leaves pointed at the ends and hanging on slender stalks. This appears to be the commonest of the Poplars of northeastern continental Asia; it is found from the valley of the Amoor River to China, where it is common in the north but exceedingly rare in the western provinces. This is a small, perfectly hardy tree which should be popular in the colder parts of the United States and Canada. Young plants are sometimes fastigiate in habit, with erect branches and smaller leaves, but this habit seems to disappear as the trees grow older.

**Rosa caudata**. This is a Rose discovered by Wilson in western China. It is one of the Cinnamomae section of the genus, and is a tall vigorous shrub with stout arching stems covered not very thickly with stout spines, dark green foliage, and flowers about two inches in diameter, in wide, sometimes twenty-five-flowered clusters. The beauty of the flowers is increased by the white marking at the base of the pure pink petals. The fruit is orange-red, an inch long, gradually contracted above into a narrow neck crowned by the much enlarged calyxlobes. This handsome Rose is flowering now for the third year in the Arboretum; it is perfectly hardy and an excellent addition to the Roses of its class. It can be seen in bloom now in the Shrub Collection and with the other Roses in the special Chinese collection on Bussey Hill.

**Rosa setipoda**. This is another member of the Cinnamomae, differing chiefly from *R. caudata* in the more numerous spines on the stems,



in the shape of the fewer-flowered flower-clusters, and in the presence of gland-tipped prickles on the stalks of the flowers and on the fruit. The flowers in size and color resemble those of *R. caudata*. This Rose was first sent to the Arboretum by Monsieur Maurice de Vilmorin and it has flowered here now for several years. The plants now in bloom were raised from seeds collected by Wilson in western China and can be seen in the Shrub Collection and on Bussey Hill.

**Rosa multibracteata.** This is a small plant with slender stems covered with numerous small spines, small leaves and innumerable small, pink, solitary flowers which are followed by comparatively large red fruits covered with glandular prickles. This very hardy little Rose was discovered by Wilson in the extreme western part of China, and is flowering this year for the first time in the Arboretum. It is one of the last of the Chinese Roses to open its flower-buds.

**Rosa Jackii.** This beautiful Rose was introduced into the Arboretum from Korea several years ago by Mr. Jack, and when it flowered was named for him. At about the same time it was named in England *Rosa Bakeri* and *R. Kelleri*, names which cannot be used for it, however, as they had previously been given to other Roses. It is one of the Multiflorae Roses with long stems which lie flat on the ground, lustrous foliage, and pure white flowers two inches or more in diameter, in wide, many-flowered clusters. The flowers are larger than those of the Japanese *Rosa multiflora* and it blooms much later than that species. This Rose is perfectly hardy and a first-rate garden plant. The hybridizer ought to be able to find in it a good subject from which to raise a race of hardy, late-flowering Rambler Roses. It is now in flower in the Shrub Collection where it is labeled *R. Kelleri*.

**Sambucus canadensis.** As the flowers of the Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) begin to fade those on the native Elder (*Sambucus canadensis*) open. This is the last of the native shrubs to make a conspicuous show of flowers in the Arboretum. It is particularly beautiful this year along Bussey Brook in the valley at the northern base of Hemlock Hill where many plants have grown from seeds sown by birds. It is conspicuous, too, about the ponds near the junction of the Meadow and the Forest Hills Roads. Few native shrubs make a greater show than this Elder with its broad heads of white flowers and lustrous black fruits. Growing with it in the Shrub Collection is a form with leaflets deeply divided into narrow segments (var. *acutiloba*). There is also here a form with dull yellow fruit (var. *chlorocarpa*), and a plant which originated a few years ago in a European nursery (var. *maxima*) with flower-clusters three times as large as those of the wild plant, and such large and heavy bunches of fruit that the branches are hardly able to support them. This form flowers ten or twelve days later than the common wild plant.

**Rhododendron arborescens.** Before the last flowers of the Yellow Azalea of the southern Appalachian Mountains (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*) have fallen those of another Appalachian species (*R. arborescens*) open. This is one of the most beautiful of all the American Azaleas, with large fragrant flowers which, pale rose color in the bud, are pure white as the corolla expands. The long bright red filaments and styles add to the beauty of the flowers. It is a shrub sometimes

twelve or fifteen feet high, with leaves dark green and very lustrous above and pale below, and with an odor when dry of newly mown grass. Sent to Europe more than a century ago it was soon lost from gardens until its reintroduction by the Arboretum in 1880. There is a mass of this *Azalea* on the right-hand side of the Valley Road in front of the Hickories.

***Rhododendron viscosum*.** This is the last of the *Azaleas* to bloom and is just beginning to open its flowers. It is an inhabitant of swamps in the eastern part of the country and is known as the Clammy *Azalea* or more generally perhaps as the Swamp Honeysuckle. As a garden plant it is chiefly valuable for the delightful fragrance of the pure white, long-tubed, clammy viscid flowers and for their lateness. Masses of this plant can be seen in front of the native woods on both sides of the Meadow Road. For more than two months *Azaleas* have now been in flower in the Arboretum, and during this period no other group of plants has given it more of beauty and interest.

***Rhododendron maximum*.** This native species is the last of the *Rhododendrons* with evergreen leaves to flower. It is one of the hardiest of all *Rhododendrons* in this climate, and no other species which can be successfully grown here has such large and handsome leaves. The flowers are white more or less tinged with pink, and are borne in rather small compact heads. They are handsome in their delicate colors, but are overtopped and a good deal hidden by the young branchlets which, unlike those of *R. catawbiense* and of most other species, make their annual growth before the flowers open. The plants of this *Rhododendron* in the group at the base of Hemlock Hill, near the South Street entrance, are now in flower.

***Crataegus cordata*.** This is the last of the Hawthorns to bloom and is now in full flower. It is the so-called Washington Thorn and a native of the southern Appalachian foothills and of the region westward to Missouri. It is a tree sometimes thirty feet high with erect branches, small, nearly triangular, shining leaves which turn bright scarlet in the autumn, small, dull white flowers in small compact clusters, and small fruit which remains on the branches with little loss of color until late spring. The late flowers, the brilliancy of the autumn foliage, and the abundance and brightness of the fruit during the winter months make this one of the most desirable of the American Hawthorns as a garden plant.

***Viburnum Canbyi*.** This is the last of the *Viburnums* to bloom in the Arboretum where its flowers are just opening. It is a native of eastern Pennsylvania and of Delaware, and has recently been found in Indiana; it is the largest and handsomest of the blue-fruited American species of which *V. dentatum* is the best known. It is a plant which is improved by cultivation, and there are great round-topped specimens in the Arboretum twelve or fifteen feet high and broad, and splendid objects at all seasons. Such plants can be seen on the right-hand side of the entrance to the Administration Building and on the Meadow Road. The earliest *Viburnum*, *V. alnifolium*, flowered here the first of May, and from that day to this *Viburnums* have been flowering in the Arboretum.